



Pedro E. Segarra
Mayor

OUR CITY, OUR RESPONSIBILITY **VISION TO OVERCOME HARTFORD'S CHALLENGES**

---NEWS AND COMMUNITY RELEASE---

(June 24, 2011) --- On the eve of his 1st Anniversary of taking office as Hartford's 66th Mayor, Pedro E. Segarra today outlined a long list of accomplishments in his first year in office and acknowledged the challenges that lie ahead for Connecticut's Capital City.

Despite a sluggish national economy, the Segarra Administration:

- 1) Resolved and balanced three years of budget deficits and have not increased taxes;
- 2) Lowered the mill rate without sacrificing essential services;
- 3) Achieved this without layoffs and without drawing down money from the Rainy Day Fund.

"Yes, there is a lot of progress but there is also still a lot of work to do especially in the area of public safety. This is our city, so it is our responsibility—together—to not just raise the bar, but to set a higher standard. First, people need to feel safe, AND be safe," said Mayor Segarra.

"Serious crime is down so far this year, but let's be real-- numbers don't matter when you are a victim of crime. I understand that pain and in the coming weeks we will launch a comprehensive effort that will bring together federal, state, and local resources to curb the recent rash of gun violence," the Mayor added.

Domestic violence, which accounts for one-third of our City's violent crimes, is also an issue that requires immediate attention. The Mayor announced that the Hartford Police Department has been building a relationship with the Boston Police Department to share best practices to improve outcomes for our Domestic Violence Task Force.

While Mayor Segarra indicated the importance of providing positive alternatives for Hartford's youth including the Police Activities League and increasing funding for summer youth employment, he also talked about the significance of creating jobs for all of Hartford's residents, especially in neighborhoods where unemployment is running in the double digits.

"Jobs are the keystone to strong neighborhoods. If neighborhoods are strong, people will want to live and invest in them," said the Mayor.

For instance, the first year of *One City, One Plan* has been successful but the Mayor indicated that some priority projects needed to be addressed more quickly. This prompted the launch of the *Livable and Sustainable Neighborhoods Initiative* earlier this week, which:

- 1) Will tackle blight head-on while focusing on community projects and small infrastructure jobs;
- 2) Creates a *Blight Strike Force* to pinpoint targets in vulnerable areas and complete designated projects within two years;
- 3) Dedicates one attorney in the Corporation Counsel's office to handle blight matters in order to push back on absentee landlords.

Business development starts with strong neighborhoods. The Mayor believes that by making Hartford a more livable city, we will make it a more enjoyable city to do business in.

"If we can encourage entrepreneurship and cultivate a sense of innovation, we will create jobs," the Mayor explained.

Another job creator is road construction. While Mayor Segarra tripled the road paving projects for the summer of 2011, he said that more needs to be done next year to erase too many years of neglect.

"Past failures to make hard choices have now made it difficult to navigate our city streets. Partnerships and proper planning with entities like the MDC and CL&P mean construction and streetscapes will be done ONCE, as opposed to tearing up a road each time something new needs to be added. Case in point is the no longer-stalled Albany Avenue Streetscape," Mayor Segarra said.

The Mayor again emphasized that the most important challenge to the Capital City is creating more opportunities in the areas of income growth, education and job creation. That is why he launched a comprehensive initiative called *Opportunities Hartford*. This project is similar to efforts pursued in Providence and New York City.

It is designed to:

- 1) Bring the many city, state non-profit and non-government organizations together;
- 2) Maximize service delivery, create economies of scale and increase efficiency and accountability;
- 3) Encourage collaboration and communication between stakeholders.

Phase I of the project is complete and a small team, led by two members of the Segarra Administration's Cabinet, is working on Phase II and, ultimately, the release of comprehensive action plan later this fall.

"As Mayor, I have focused -- and will continue to focus -- on quality of life issues. They unite neighborhoods and attract positive attention from surrounding areas that can prove beneficial for perception, business growth and, most importantly, to our families. While I will remain focused on moving Hartford forward in ways that are consistent with my four key goals, we must remember that this is OUR city. Only together will we turn Hartford into the Capital City that it can and should be," concluded the Mayor.